

SECTION 4. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

Master Contracts will be awarded in accordance with the Competitive Sealed Proposals procurement process under Code of Maryland Regulations 21.05.03. The Competitive Sealed Proposals method is based upon discussion and revision of proposals during these discussions.

Accordingly, the State may hold discussions with all offerors judged reasonably susceptible of being selected for award, or potentially so. However, the State also reserves the right to make an award without holding discussions. In either case of holding discussions or not doing so, the State may determine an offeror to be not responsible and/or not reasonably susceptible of being selected for award, at any time after the initial closing date of receipt of proposals and the review of those proposals. Financial proposals of qualified offerors will be opened only after all technical proposals have been evaluated.

4.1 SELECTION PROCESS

The first step in the process will be to review the technical proposals for compliance with the proposal format in Section 3 of the RFP and for any exceptions the offeror has taken to the requirements of this RFP or contract (Attachment A.) Offerors who take exceptions may be disqualified and their proposals eliminated from further consideration.

The next level of review will be an evaluation for technical merit. During this review oral presentations and discussions will typically be held. The purpose of such discussions will be to assure a full understanding of the State's requirements and the offeror's ability to perform, and to facilitate arrival at a contract that will be most advantageous to the State.

Offerors must confirm in writing any substantive oral clarification of, or change in, their proposals made in the course of discussions. Any such written clarification or change then becomes part of the offeror's proposal.

Offerors whose technical proposals are judged to be not reasonably susceptible of being selected for award may be disqualified at this point.

The separate financial proposal of each qualified offeror will be distributed to the Evaluation Committee for analysis following the completion of the technical evaluation. After a review of the financial proposals of qualified offerors, the Procurement Officer may again conduct discussions.

When in the best interest of the State, the Procurement Officer may permit offerors who have submitted acceptable proposals to revise their initial proposals and submit, in writing, best and final offers.

Upon completion of all discussions and negotiations, the Procurement Officer will recommend award of the contract to the responsible offeror whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous to the State considering evaluation and price factors as set forth in this RFP. In making this most advantageous offeror determination, technical factors will be given more weight than financial factors.

4.2 TECHNICAL PROPOSALS EVALUATION CRITERIA

Evaluation of the proposals will be performed by a committee established for that purpose and will be based on the selection criteria set forth below which are listed in order of descending importance:

A. General Corporate Experience, Qualifications, Capabilities and Past Performance

The Offeror will be evaluated on past experience with similar projects and pertinent corporate resources. The State will review the Offeror's overview of its experience rendering services similar to those included in Section 2 (Specifications) of this RFP, which should include a summary of the services offered and the number of years the Offeror has provided these services. Finally, the State will evaluate the Offeror's client reference surveys.

B. Program Management

The State will evaluate the Offeror's overall approach of managing this Contract and satisfying the requirements of the solicitation. The items that will be evaluated are included in Section 3.2.2.2B.

C. Qualifications of the Program Manager and other representative labor category personnel.

D. Financial Stability

E. General Economic Benefit to Maryland

4.3 RECIPROCAL PREFERENCE

Although Maryland law does not authorize procuring agencies to favor resident Offerors in awarding procurement contracts, many other states do grant their resident businesses preferences over Maryland contractors. Therefore, as described in COMAR 21.05.01.04, a resident business preference will be given if: a responsible offeror whose headquarters, principal base of operations, or principal site that will primarily provide the services required under this RFP is in another state submits the most advantageous offer; the other state gives a preference to its residents through law, policy, or practice; and, the preference does not conflict with a Federal law or grant affecting the procurement contract. The preference given shall be identical to the preference that the other state, through law, policy or practice gives to its residents.

Financial Proposals will be evaluated separately. The financial evaluation will be based upon the prices submitted by the offeror on the Financial Proposal Form (Attachment E). Offerors must propose prices for **contract years 1, 2 and 3 for all labor classes. These are the prices the State will pay for all defined labor.** The offeror will record the unit prices, **for contract years** in the columns label Offeror's Price. These entries will be multiplied by the State provided factor in the column labeled State Factor. The result of this calculation will be recorded in the appropriate columns labeled as Evaluated Price. The prices in the Evaluated Price columns will be added to produce the result in the boxes in the row labeled the "Total Composite Labor Rate". The 10 "Total Composite Labor Rate" prices will be then be averaged and the result recorded in the row labeled "Average Total Composite Labor Rate". The "Average Total Composite Labor Rate" will establish the financial ranking of each offeror from the lowest to the highest.

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